United Nations S/2007/695

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 November 2007

Original: English

Letter dated 30 November 2007 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I wish to refer to the exchange of letters between my predecessor and the President of the Security Council, dated 29 September 2006 (S/2006/778) and 17 October 2006 (S/2006/819), on the progress made by the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission and with respect to the continuation of the activities of the United Nations team supporting the work of the Mixed Commission, with funding from the regular budget. In the same spirit, by the present letter, I would like to inform you of the latest achievements and activities undertaken by the Mixed Commission as it continues to support and facilitate the peaceful implementation of the 12 October 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice on the Cameroon/Nigeria border dispute.

The mandate of the Mixed Commission includes supporting the demarcation of the land boundary and the maritime boundary, facilitating the withdrawal and transfer of authority along the boundary, addressing the situation of affected populations and making recommendations on confidence-building measures. With the final appropriation of $14,338,400 from the regular budget for the biennium 2006-2007 and the appropriation of $6,856,900 for 2007, the Mixed Commission has been able to move the process forward in a smooth and peaceful manner, and to promote dialogue and communication between the two countries. The following are some of the activities for which the United Nations support team has provided substantive, technical and logistical support to the Mixed Commission.

The four sections of the ruling of the International Court of Justice, comprising the withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Lake Chad area in December 2003, along the land boundary in July 2004, the agreement on the modalities of withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Bakassi peninsula in June 2006 and the delineation of the maritime boundary, agreed upon in May 2007, have been resolved. In addition, United Nations civilian observers have concluded that the prevailing situation concerning the rights of affected populations is satisfactory. Concerning the demarcation of the 1,950-kilometre land boundary, so far more than 700 kilometres have been demarcated. Around 900 kilometres of land boundary will be assessed before the end of 2007. Progress has also been achieved in the implementation of confidence-building measures. A transborder multinational highway project is being formulated. Initiatives on social amenities within the Lake Chad area are being promoted, and support for resource mobilization for the Lake Chad Basin Commission has been provided. Additional confidence-building projects to be submitted to partners for extrabudgetary funding and covering sections of the

07-62246 (E) 041207

boundary in the Lake Chad area, the land boundary and the Bakassi peninsula, are being formulated.

The follow-up Committee established to monitor the implementation of the Greentree Agreement of 12 June 2006, concerning the modalities of withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Bakassi peninsula, has continued to hold regular meetings preceded by field visits to the peninsula. In 2007, the Committee held three meetings (19 March, 2-5 May and 25-27 July). To facilitate the monitoring of the prevailing situation in the Bakassi peninsula, the Mixed Commission opened an outstation in Calabar, Nigeria, in October 2007, which works in liaison with the office of the United Nations civilian observers team based in Yaoundé.

In 2008, the Mixed Commission will focus on accelerating the land demarcation exercise and on enhancing confidence-building activities. Regarding the demarcation exercise, the Mixed Commission expects to complete the field assessment of the land boundary by the end of 2008 and intends to contract the first phase of the pillar emplacement by the beginning of 2008. Other activities related to demarcation (quality assurance of geodetic stations, and the ground control points measurement) are expected to be contracted by the end of 2008. Furthermore, the Mixed Commission is fully committed to contributing to a consultative and transparent approach towards minimizing the impact of demarcation on the affected populations and preventing the occurrence of serious disputes. The use of a United Nations civilian observer team responds to the need to safeguard the rights of the affected populations.

In particular, consultations between the Chairman of the Mixed Commission and United Nations agencies in Cameroon have led to the formulation of a United Nations joint programme on humanitarian and development issues in support of affected populations in the boundary areas in Cameroon.

With regard to confidence-building measures, the Mixed Commission will, in 2008, continue to support efforts aimed at ensuring the security and welfare of the affected populations, as well as promoting initiatives in order to enhance trust between the two Governments and their peoples. Key areas identified for action by Governments and their partners entail assistance in food security, education, health, water and basic infrastructure, including the rehabilitation of the Mutengene-Abakiliki highway. The Mixed Commission further wishes to encourage environmental projects, as well as the revitalization of the Lake Chad Basin Commission.

Concerning the Bakassi peninsula, the transfer of authority in the Zone is expected to be completed by August 2008, in compliance with the terms of the Greentree Agreement of 12 June 2006. In addition, further to the conclusion in May 2007 of the implementation of the International Court of Justice judgment of 10 October 2002 concerning the maritime boundary between the two countries, the Mixed Commission will contribute to the reaching of an agreement on oil and gas fields straddling the maritime boundary between the two countries. The Mixed Commission plans to further contribute to determining the maritime tripoint between Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria.

I would like to recall that up to 2003, the Mixed Commission was funded entirely from extrabudgetary funds. During the period 2004-2007, the activities of the Mixed Commission were funded through the United Nations regular budget. The Governments of Austria, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden and

Uruguay have provided in kind support for the substantive and technical work of the Mixed Commission, including military and legal experts. In addition, logistical support was provided by the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria, while the two countries, as well as Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union made voluntary financial contributions to the trust fund for demarcation activities.

Given the cost-effective nature of this mission and the important tasks remaining at this juncture in the work of the Mixed Commission, and taking into account that the Presidents of Cameroon and Nigeria, at Greentree in June 2006, renewed once again their commitment to pursue the peaceful implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice and to work together to move the process forward until its completion, it is my intention to ask for additional resources from the regular budget for 2008 for the support team of the Mixed Commission to help advance the peaceful implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon